2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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Myowun wrote to him to say that as the envoy would not take his advice he must break off all intercourse, and the English thanthaman would be good enough not to come near his house for the future. Captain Cox had had a fence put up round his house to keep away the inquisitive rabble, at a cost of twenty rupees. One morning when he woke up he found this had been unceremoniously carried away, and that it had been used to enclose a place near the river where the heir-apparent's head might be washed. Finally great pressure was put upon him to take the oath of allegiance to the king; he was to drink the water in which the muskets and lances of the guard had been dipped, and it was expressly stipulated that he should pay for his oath just as any Burman would have to do. Scores of like details might be mentioned with regard to all the other ambassadors and residents. It will be sufficient, however, to mention that, in later years, one resident had a cane flourished over his head by a convict lictor, and that the last *chargé d'affaires* of all was chased by a howling rabble from the Mandalay bazaar to the Residency gates, which were broken in—no great exertion of strength was necessary certainly—all because he had killed a pariah dog that was snapping at his heels.

If the various Government representatives were treated in this way, non-official Englishmen could not expect great reverence to be paid to them, and it is hardly worth mentioning that in 1881 a Rangoon merchant, yelled at by convict lictors, went down on his knees while one of the leading spirits of the massacres, the Hpaung Wun, went by on his elephant. Little wonder then that the patriotic fictions of the Mahā Yazawin were believed, and that the perusal of them was all the more greedily indulged in. The wearing of shoes in the Palace was never settled till there had ceased to be a Lord of it.

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But it is not so much the English that suffered—though occasionally a few of them did get stoned—as the smaller nations and tribes who live around and among the Burmese. It must be acknowledged that the Burman is a sad bully; but the white strangers could reduce him to civility, if to nothing else, very speedily. It is different with other races—some perhaps aboriginal, some invaders of Burma as much

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma(Hill Peoples)AP
Burmese AP4

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as the Burmese themselves. The Chins, the Karens, and, in some degree, even the stalwart if simple Shans, have all suffered in common with weaker nationalities from the cunning and braggadocio of the Burman. The Mahā Yaza-win delights no less in recounting tales of barbaric diplomacy than in heroics about gallant generals who hold quicksilver in their mouths and advance on the quailing foe, leaping eighteen or twenty cubits in the air. For example, the chronicles of Prome relate the well-known world-story of the bullock's hide of ground. A tribe came from the East under the command of an Amazon. She obtained from the aborigines—probably now some of the hill-tribes in Arakan—a grant of as much land as could be enclosed within an ox-hide, and, following the example of Dido, cut the hide into strips. She got into difficulties, however, and would probably have been driven out had she not married a neighbouring king. A stepson of hers founded the ancient town of Tharekettara (Prome), an event said to have been prophesied by the Buddha Gautama himself, in proof whereof the Shwesandaw pagoda exists to the present day.

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A story of a similar character is told with regard to the Shans. The Burmans had a quarrel with some of these big-boned highlandmen as to the ownership of a tract of fine paddy-land. The Shans were in force, and perfectly prepared to fight about the matter. The Burmese therefore resorted to craft. An old hermit was referred to on the subject. He said that the party which first finished building a pagoda of a certain fixed size should have the disputed territory. So both sides set to work. The Burmese soon found that the sturdy hillmen were distancing them. At night, therefore, the chief had recourse to stratagem. He made a framework of bamboos of the required height, had it covered with cloth, and daubed the cloth with white plaster. When daylight came, and the Shans saw the Burmese shrine complete and perfect, even to the extent of offerings of fruit and candles, their astonishment and dismay were such that they marched off straightway to the hills—ascribing the rapid erection to supernatural assistance, and never dreaming of examining the precocious payā; whereat the Burmese chronicler chuckles with patriotic delight, and glorifies the

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Hill Peoples) AP1
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shrewdness of his countrymen. The same story is told of the foundation of the Arakan empire by the younger of two brothers who came from India.

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But it is in the relations with the milder-natured tribes, such as the Karens and Chins, or the small if warlike septs such as the Kachins, that the Burman most comes up to the truculence of the Mahā Yazawin. Out of the northern Kachins—bold robber bands, armed with queer, home-made, stockless guns—little was to be gained. They lived on the hills, and owned nothing but pigs; but they raided on low-land villages, and the Burmans retaliated, and there were periodic seasons of mutual crucifixion. Long ago these clans had the reputation of kindly hospitality, but Burmese tyranny made most of them dangerous savages. It is different with the Karens and Chins. The former, a heavy, plethoric people, endure their wrongs with dull indifference, all but the fierce Red Karens, who kept up a perpetual guerilla warfare, after the manner of the Kachins. The Karens account for their wrongs in the following way. When Yŭwa created the world he took three handfuls of earth and threw them round about him. From one sprang the Burmans, from another the Karens, and from the third the Kalās, the foreigners. The Karens were very talkative and made more noise than all the others, and so the Creator believed that there were too many of them, and he threw another half handful to the Burmans, who thus gained such a supremacy that they soon overcame the Karens, and have oppressed them ever since.

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The Chins were subjected to such long-continued and systematic ill-treatment on the part of the Burmese, that traditions accounting for this oppression actually form a part of the national religion. All mankind, they say, is descended from a woman called Hlinyu, who laid 101 eggs, from the last laid of which sprang the Chins. Hlinyu loved the youngest best; but he had gone away, and before she found him again the whole world except bleak mountain-ranges had been partitioned out among her other children. So the Chin first man got the hills, and as compensation was given elephants, horses, cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls. Unfortunately, Hlinyu appointed the Burman brother to

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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CHAPTER XVIII

MANNERS

'Not where others fail, or do, or leave undone—the wise should notice what himself has done, or left undone.'—*Dammapada.*

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A REMARKABLE trait of the Burmese character is their unwillingness to interfere in other people's affairs. Whether it arises from their religion of self-culture or no, I cannot say, but it is in full keeping with it. Every man's acts and thoughts are his own affair, think the Burmans; each man is free to go his own way, to think his own thoughts, to act his own acts, as long as he does not too much annoy his neighbours. Each man is responsible for himself and for himself alone, and there is no need for him to try and be guardian also to his fellows. And so the Burman likes to go his own way, to be a free man within certain limits; and the freedom that he demands for himself, he will extend also to his neighbours. He has a very great and wide tolerance towards all his neighbours, not thinking it necessary to disapprove of his neighbours' acts because they may not be the same as his own, never thinking it necessary to interfere with his

16:Fielding Hall G-8 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

neighbours as long as the laws are not broken. Our ideas that what habits are different to our habits must be wrong, and being wrong, require correction at our hands, is very far from his thoughts. He never desires to interfere with anyone. Certain as he is that his own ideas are best, he is contented with that knowledge, and is not ceaselessly desirous of proving it upon other people. And so a foreigner may go and live in a Burman village, may settle down there and live his own life and follow his own customs in perfect freedom, may dress and eat and drink and pray and die as he likes. No one will interfere. No one will try and correct him; no one will be for ever insisting to him that he is an outcast, either from civilization or from religion. The people will accept him for what he is, and leave the matter there. If he likes to change his ways and conform to Burmese habits and Buddhist forms, so much the better; but if not, never mind.

It is, I think, a great deal owing to this habit of mind that the manners of the Burmese are usually so good, children in civilization as they are. There is amongst them no rude inquisitiveness and no desire to in any way circumscribe your freedom, by either remark or act. Surely of all things that cause trouble, nothing is so common amongst us as the interference with each other's ways, as the needless giving of advice. It seems to each of us that we are responsible, not only for ourselves, but also for everyone else near us; and so if we disapprove of any act, we are always in a hurry to express our disapproval and to try and persuade the actor to our way of thinking. We are for ever thinking of others

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

571 and trying to improve them; as a nation we try to coerce weaker nations and to convert stronger ones, and as individuals we do the same. We are sure that other people cannot but be better and happier for being brought into our ways of thinking, by force even, if necessary. We call it philanthropy.

571 609 [779] But the Buddhist does not believe this at all. Each man, each nation has, he thinks, enough to do managing his or its own affairs. Interference, any sort of interference, he is sure can do nothing but harm. *You* cannot save a man. He can save himself; you can do nothing for him. You may force or persuade him into an outer agreement with you, but what is the value of that? All dispositions that are good, that are of any value at all, must come spontaneously from the heart of man. First, he must desire them, and then struggle to obtain them; by this means alone can any virtue be reached. This, which is the key of his religion, is the key also of his private life. Each man is a free man to do what he likes, in a way that we have never understood.

Even under the rule of the Burmese kings there was the very widest tolerance. You never heard of a foreigner being molested in any way, being forbidden to live as he liked, being forbidden to erect his own places of worship. He had the widest freedom, as long as he infringed no law. The Burmese rule may not have been a good one in many ways, but it was never guilty of persecution, of any attempt at forcible conversion, of any desire to make such an attempt.

This tolerance, this inclination to let each man

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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87. VILLAGE LAY SCHOOL.

next to a parent, with a life-long devotion.

Before or after the monastic novitiate, it is the custom for the Burman lads to have themselves tattooed from the waist to the knee (No. 152). Not to submit to this ordeal is to incur the reproach of cowardice. The tattooing is an intricate pattern of animals and tracery. Owing to the extent of surface involved, the process is most painful. It occupies days or weeks, according to the fortitude of the subject, who is drugged with opium for the occasion. The instrument has a handle weighted at the butt, and a long point of bronze, split like a ruling-pen. It is worked with great rapidity. The pigment is a kind of lamp-black of the consistence of ink. It shows bluish black through the brown skin. When a Burman tucks up his loin-cloth, as he always does for work or exercise (*kaddung-chaik*), he looks as if he had black knee-breeches. As plain as the contrast is to the eye, ordinary photographic plates fail to render it. In No. 153 it appears fully. On other parts of the body the men frequently have horoscopes and cabalistic diagrams tattooed with vermilion (*se-ut*, No. 162) for luck and bravado. The Shan practice of letting in gold and silver discs the size of two-penny pieces—beneath the skin—is sometimes imitated by Burmans as a charm against sword-cuts and bullets (*dèbyi*; *thenebbyi*). The Arakanese, who repudiate the custom of *ngwin*, ascribe it to a Burman King, who endeavoured to disguise his leprosy in this way.

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88. SITE-PLYING.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma API
Indians
Burmese AP4

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trees. All that the villagers asked for (and of course got) was exemption from land-tax. Another hopeful feature is that the Burman is not devoid of the quality of self-criticism. With the Indian retail trader comes also the wholesale merchant—Persian, Parsi, Súrati, Chetti and Bania. And the Burmans at large accept the situation, never dreaming that by travelling abroad and seeing for themselves how other nations manage and how they fare, they might learn to conduct their own business, and help to save Burma from sinking to the level of proletariate countries. Natives of India and China have learned so much in their capacities of assistants to European merchants that they are getting the retail trade in European goods to themselves. Even as importers, with their agents in Europe, they are making themselves independent of the European merchant in the East. The European spheres of activity on which Burmans

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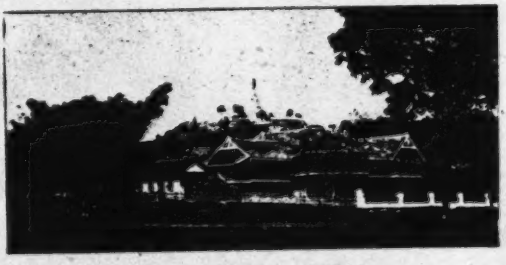

366. EUROPEAN TYPE OF HOUSE.

have entered are saw-mill enterprise and the profession of advocacy, in which latter they have attained a high standing.

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To the Burman, the native of India is the foreigner *par excellence*—*Kalá*—and shares the disrepute that a stay-at-home people commonly accord to the foreigner, especially when he is a needy one. To them he is the dog that eats the crumbs which fall from his table ("*K'we-Kalá!*"). While the Chinaman, despite his uncouthness and uncanny parasitic trade, is considered an eligible man, *Kalá-mayá*—nigger's-wife—is a term of reproach. The *Kalá* half-breeds are called *Zerbádi*. They appear to possess fewer good qualities than either of the pure races. The Euro-Burman half-breeds are called *Bayinjí*—(Feringhi, the Indian equivalent of Frank) explained by the Burmans as *Bayin-gyí* (adherent of) the Great Prince (the Pope).

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Europeans are the only remaining foreigners whom the Burmans encounter, excepting a few Armenians, Jews and Malays. Armenians were beginning to play